



**Year in Review
2022**

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Message from the ADSP Manager



Dear Valued Supporters and Stakeholders,

It is with great pride that I present to you our 2022 Year in Review. As the Manager of the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP), I am thrilled to share that this past year has been one of the most productive in our short history. Over the past 12 months, we have made significant strides in our efforts to contribute a distinctive, field-led, perspective to policy and advocacy processes which can sometimes be removed from the realities on the ground and the concerns of those living with, and in, displacement.

With the collective support of our three member agencies – global leaders in innovative policy and programming – despite major operational constraints, we have been able to lead and contribute to discourse for improved outcomes for displacement affected communities in the region.

Throughout 2022, the context for displaced persons within and from Afghanistan remained challenging, with limited access to durable solutions in countries of origin, transit or host. In Afghanistan, the humanitarian environment continued to deteriorate, with greater numbers of Afghans – including women and girls – facing even greater precarity. In Myanmar, ongoing conflict resulted in steady movements to Thailand, India and elsewhere in the region. In both contexts, the need for coordinated, timely, predictable and collective approaches is clear, and has remained front and centre in our approach.

One of our major achievements in 2022 was the development and formalization of our 2023-2025 Strategy. Over the course of six months, and through a series of consultations with members and partners, ADSP was able to successfully identify, articulate and commit to our trajectory for the next three years. This has provided ADSP and our members with a clearer sense of purpose, and direction around our work, as well as to strengthen our ability to be more impactful and targeted.

Furthermore, we also made significant progress in our advocacy and policy efforts, working closely with key stakeholders to drive positive change at the local, national, and international levels. Our advocacy efforts led to new avenues of engagement

with the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), as well as forge clearer regional messages and thinking as it pertains to Rohingya displacement.

In addition, we have also increased our partnerships with like-minded organizations, creating synergies and leveraging resources to amplify our impact. To this end, we'd like to extend a big thank you to the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS), the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) amongst others.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the unwavering support of our generous donors and partners. We are grateful for your generosity and partnership, and we pledge to continue our work and resources for even greater impact in the coming years. As we look ahead to the future, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. We remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission and our vision as outlined in our 2023-2025 ADSP Strategy, and we are dedicated to expanding our reach, advocating for positive change, and furthering the prospects for durable solutions for persons displaced from Afghanistan and Myanmar. With your continued support, we are confident that we can achieve even greater heights in the years to come.

In conclusion, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each one of you who have contributed to our success. Your support has made a tangible difference to our work, and we are proud to share our achievements with you through this Year in Review. I invite you to explore the report further to learn more about our accomplishments in 2022. Thank you once again for your continued support, and we look forward to your continued partnership as we strive to create the conditions for durable solutions for the region's displaced populations.

Sincerely,
Evan Jones, Manager
Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP)

Acronyms

ADFM	Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration
ADSP	Asia Displacement Solutions Platform
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
APRRN	Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAPRS	Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CPD	Centre for Policy Development
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
GRF	Global Refugee Forum
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MMC	Mixed Migration Centre
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PRRiA	Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia
RSM	Rohingya Society of Malaysia
SCOM	Standing Committee
SHARP	Supporting Humanitarian Advocacy and Refugee Protection in Asia
SSAR	Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Who We Are

ADSP exists to respond to the increasing number of people displaced across the Asia region who do not have adequate protection or opportunities for sustainable and dignified solutions. It draws on the operational experience of its three member organisations – the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) – to identify and advocate for regional policies and practices that enable displaced people to access their rights in a predictable and sustainable way. With a targeted focus on displaced people from Afghanistan and Myanmar, ADSP's overall goal is to ensure pathways to solutions that extend beyond reliance on humanitarian assistance.

ADSP's Governance Structure

Steering Committee

ADSP is governed by a Steering Committee, made up of the Regional Directors of DRC, NRC and IRC. The Steering Committee is the governing body of the ADSP and provides strategic oversight, guidance and direction to the ADSP, including setting its long-term strategy, goals and objectives.

Technical Committee

The ADSP Technical Committee is comprised of key regional staff from member organisations. The Technical Committee provides region-wide oversight and feedback, along with technical guidance and operational support to the ADSP. It has the responsibility to ensure that the activities proposed and conducted by the ADSP are appropriate to the regional context and are technically sound.

What We Do

Humanitarian perspectives, specifically the interests and priorities of displacement-affected people, constitute a valuable part of solutions but are under-represented in existing processes. ADSP's added-value lies in the composition of its member organisations – three major humanitarian displacement organisations with response coverage across the region. Learnings from program, advocacy actions undertaken at country level and voices of displacement-affected people are brought into policy discussions and processes.

We seek to ensure that regional governments, donors, UN agencies, civil society and other key stakeholders contribute to responsibility-sharing arrangements that enable people displaced from Myanmar and Afghanistan to enjoy fundamental human rights and access long-term displacement solutions.

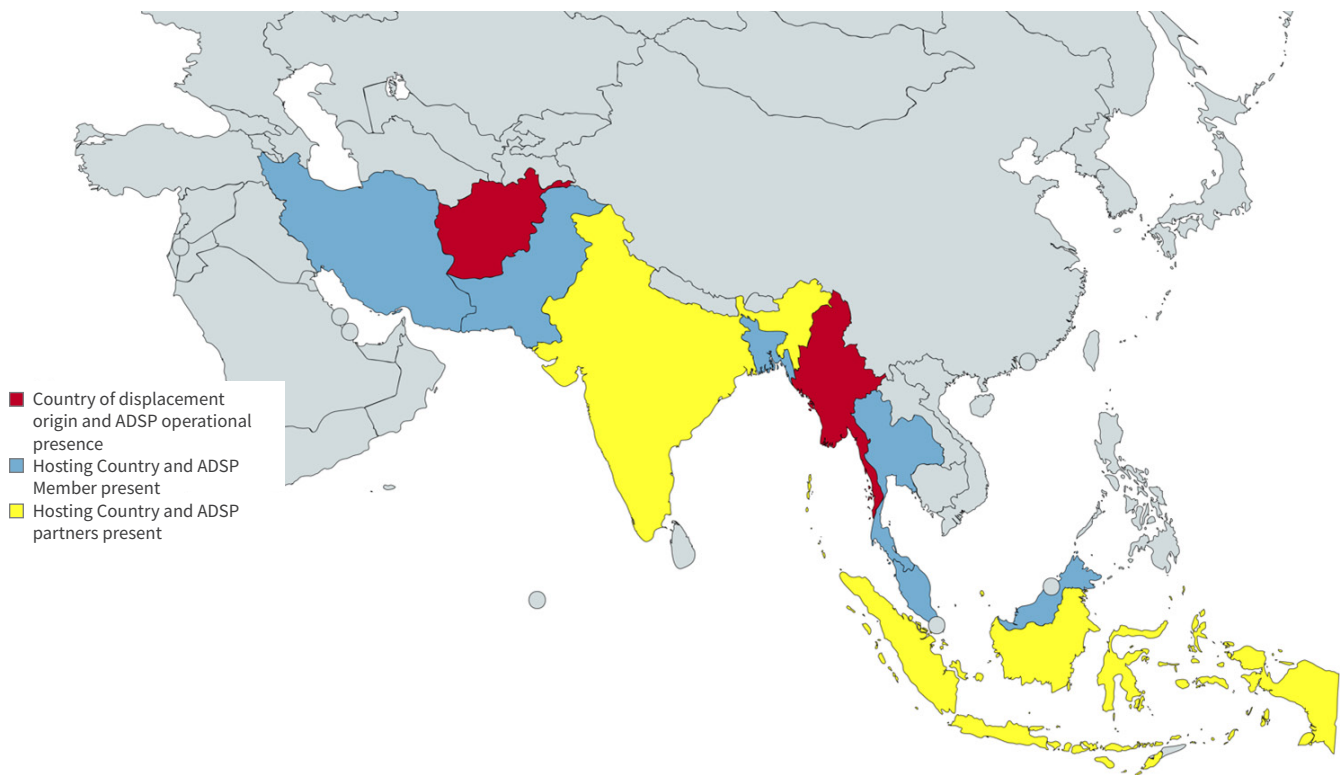
In collaboration with its members, regional stakeholders and most importantly affected populations, ADSP has two ongoing workstreams contributing to two key aims:

1. To engage with the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), and to ensure other key multilateral policy frameworks are strengthened and implemented with consistent and meaningful input from civil society and non-government organisations (NGOs)
2. To ensure national governments in Southeast Asia are taking meaningful steps to provide displaced people from Myanmar with legal status and equitable access to basic services.

To read more about ADSP's recently finalized strategy, please click [here](#).

Geographic Footprint

ADSP's work in Asia is focused on displacement from Afghanistan and Myanmar. Please see below the countries in which we have engaged, and will continue to engage as part of our ADSP Strategy 2023-2025.



Operating Environment

Across Asia, the lack of cohesive frameworks to protect refugees and provide them with the prospect of a durable solution has reverberating impacts for the communities and nations hosting them, and in turn the peace and stability of the region. The increasing number of people displaced from Afghanistan and Myanmar speaks to the need for more coherent, cohesive and coordinated approaches to long-term solutions for refugees and displaced people across the region.

Afghanistan Snapshot

Afghanistan remains one of the world's most intractable humanitarian crises. Moreover, it is one of the largest countries of origin for refugees, and also hosts significant numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) within its borders. By the end of 2021, as many as 11 million Afghans were reportedly displaced from their homes, including 3.5 million within Afghanistan, 2.6 million asylum seekers and refugees, and an estimated five million others with varied documented or undocumented legal status. Approximately 80% of the displaced population in 2021 were women and children. The impact of this humanitarian crisis has largely affected the economy over the past year forcing around 25 million Afghans into poverty. In December 2022, women's right to work in NGOs were curtailed, contributing to suppression of financial capacity of families, leading to further impoverishment and pressure for young girls to be forced into marriage. Afghans continue to be pushed from their homes by factors of economic collapse, the erosion of social safety nets, serious protection concerns, the denial of access to basic services, and recurrent climatic disasters, with extremely limited prospects for sustainable, predictable long-term solutions.

Myanmar Snapshot

UNHCR reported an estimation of 1,312,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) across the country, as of 6 September 2022, including 982,000 people who have been newly displaced within the country (51% women & 49% children) since the 1 February 2021 takeover by the de facto military authorities. Moreover, there are 1.27 million refugees and asylum seekers from Myanmar. It is also reported that by late 2021, and throughout 2022, with the military employing its "four-cuts" strategy: indiscriminate deployment of airstrikes and artillery shelling, mass burnings of villages to displace civilian populations, and denial of humanitarian access, the violence intensified especially in the north-west and south-east.

What We Achieved in 2022

- I. Expansion of the platform's work and geographic remit beyond countries where members are present (India, Malaysia and Indonesia)
- II. Strengthened partnerships outside of members, i.e. academia, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), diaspora, national NGOs, international organisations, think tanks, governments and regional bodies.
- III. Led discussions regionally around regional responses to Rohingya displacement and the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees
- IV. Expansion and diversification of funding
- V. Finalization of ADSP's 2023 – 2025 Strategy
- VI. Research finalized on 'Intersections between refugee protection, human smuggling and trafficking in South and Southeast Asia'
- VII. 3 research reports, 1 toolkit, 3 workshops, 4 consultations, and numerous other advocacy products developed and disseminated
- VIII. Increased engagement and representation at global & regional fora
- IX. Creation and institutionalization of more cohesive regional coordination mechanisms to address Rohingya displacement

Research

Undertaking and disseminating evidence-based research, situation updates, policy papers, and briefing notes related to displacement is one of ADSP's key elements of work. Each of our products specifically focus upon the interests, perspectives, and priorities of affected persons to ensure that policy and programmes are informed by realities of displaced communities.

During 2022, ADSP finalised numerous pieces of research, including:

Intersections between refugee protection, human smuggling and trafficking in South and Southeast Asia

In December 2022, under the PRRIA project, ADSP produced a joint research report entitled 'Intersections between refugee protection, human smuggling and trafficking in South and Southeast

Asia'. The objective of this research was to support the advancement of holistic protection of Rohingya in South and Southeast Asia, recognizing their position, not only as refugees, but also as individuals who are highly vulnerable to smuggling and trafficking. It aimed to support efforts to capitalize on regional interest in supporting anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking laws to (1) clarify the intersections between refugee protection and the smuggling and tracking of Rohingya refugees in Southeast Asia and Bangladesh; (2) identify and analyze national and regional refugee protection, anti-smuggling, and anti-trafficking laws, mechanisms, and frameworks; and (3) provide recommendations for key actors, including host governments, regional bodies, civil society and international actors to advance better protection outcomes for Rohingya refugees.



The research focused on Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Primary findings of the report were:

Conclusion 1: Smuggling networks enable Rohingya to leave deteriorating living conditions in Myanmar and Bangladesh and seek access to social services and economic opportunities in host countries.

Conclusion 2: An important catalyst in the adoption and architecture of national protection policies are the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration, the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, and respective Plans of Action.

Conclusion 3: National governments have responsibility to address protection needs by establishing clarity between smuggling and trafficking including

through stronger policies with consistent messaging, implementation, and enforcement.

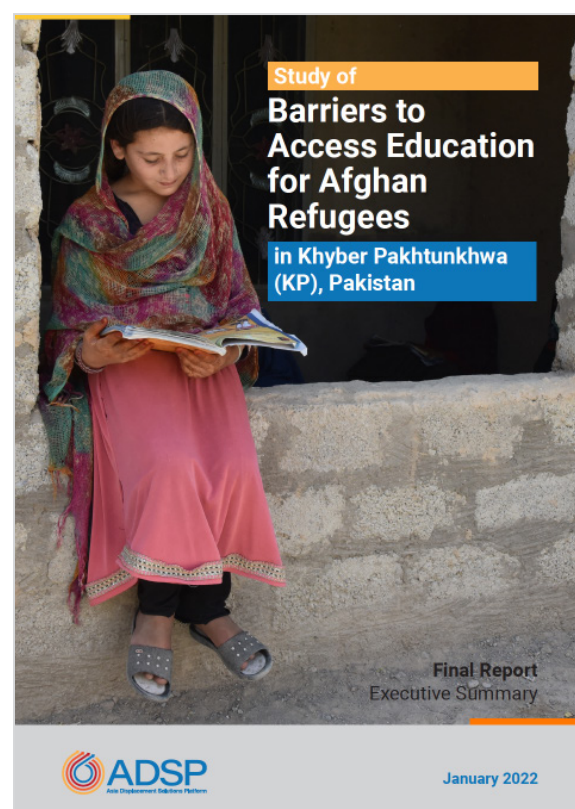
Conclusion 4: Civil society actors and stakeholders are limited in advocating for change in national governments due to power imbalances in partnerships, barriers to resources, and lack of political will.

Conclusion 5: The lack of national rights that recognize and safeguard refugee status is a fundamental barrier to protection in Thailand and Malaysia. Across the region, national governments must continue to address restrictions on work for refugees and access to basic services.

The recommendations provided focus on a variety of stakeholders including but not limited to ASEAN member states, Bali Process, donor community, INGOs, NGOs, host governments, private sector, ASEAN-ACT, IOM, UNHCR and civil society. The full report, including key policy recommendations can be found on the ADSP website [here](#).

Barriers to Access Education for Afghan Refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

The report explored the existing gaps for refugee children in the refugee villages to accessing education. Some gaps included insufficient gender appropriate services, high teacher-student ratio, distance to schools, socio-economic factors and lack of extracurricular support. The report goes on to identify a range of potential recommendations to the international community including donors, INGOs and government stakeholders.



The research is aligned with the objectives of the Global Compact for Refugees and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) in the region. Further, it was designed to help improve programming by development stakeholders, as well as offer recommendations to donors, UNHCR, and government stakeholders for designing future education programs for Afghan refugees. The full report can be accessed [here](#) and a [short version](#) is also available.

Barriers to accessing COVID-19 related healthcare for Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan



Generally, Afghan refugees live in Pakistan's border areas, often in impoverished locales with little knowledge of, or access to, services that may be legally available to them. Whilst exact data is not available, anecdotal references suggest that Afghan refugees did not have access to the same level of COVID-19 related services (testing, quarantine, treatment, and support) as local communities. Low rates of reporting and access to services could have far-reaching health consequences for Afghan refugees as well as Pakistani host communities, and result in skewed national COVID-19 statistics, high incidences of infections, and other consequent impacts. This report explores the access and barriers of Afghan refugees to healthcare services and explores the:

1. Inclusiveness of the Pakistan government's COVID-19 response from the perspective of Afghan refugees, as well as potential gaps
2. Knowledge and perceptions of Afghan refugees about the virus, prevention protocols, response services and efficacy of communication strategies
3. Whether the COVID-19 pandemic was an opportunity to

promote wider health-seeking behaviors among Afghan refugees

4. Requirements from health providers for engaging with Afghan refugee communities, adapting service delivery to enhance their willingness to seek healthcare; and
5. The current policy frameworks in Pakistan for treatment, and inclusion of refugees in COVID-19 vaccination programs.

The full report is available [here](#).

Capacity Building

Strengthening the capacities of refugee-led organisations and community-based organisations enables affected populations to participate in the discourse on durable solutions in a more efficient manner. Keeping this in view, one of the key activities undertaken by ADSP in 2022 under its ECHO funded PRRiA project was building research and advocacy capacity of the Rohingya community-based organisations in Malaysia, namely the Rohingya Society in Malaysia (RSM) and Rohingya Women Development Network (RWDN). This activity was jointly implemented by ADSP, Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) and the Geutanyoe Foundation.

ADSP fostered partnerships with both organisations with the aim to engage the CBOs in research and advocacy. This was undertaken by providing capacity building and mentorship support to actively participate in policy advocacy with government and international stakeholders.



To support this objective, ADSP delivered a four-day training in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The training was delivered through a combination of in-person activities, online presentations, and group work. Rohingya community leaders, members, and volunteers from the two CBOs were selected to participate in the training. Five participants from Rohingya Women Development Network and 12 participants from Rohingya Society in Malaysia successfully completed the training.

A pre- and post-training assessment was conducted with participants to understand their knowledge about the method and process of conducting research and advocacy. An internal evaluation report was also prepared to document the assessment results and capture learnings from the training.



Following the training, in early 2023 the CBOs developed their own research and advocacy project i.e., ‘*Understanding the current and potential contribution of Rohingya refugees to the Malaysian economy*’, with guidance and mentorship from PRRiA partners. The objectives of the project was to:

- Identify current employment trends and existing income-generating activities of working-age Rohingya refugees in Malaysia,
- Identify existing skillset(s) of Rohingya refugees that can add net value to the Malaysian labor market,
- Rohingya refugees’ access to information regarding income-generating activities and livelihood support/assistance in Malaysia, and
- Provide policy recommendations and engage key stakeholders in dialogues to facilitate informed policymaking.

In addition to the above, under ADSP’s other ECHO funded SHARP project, a capacity building workshop was organized for refugee-led organisations in India to strengthen national and regional advocacy. The first workshop saw 11 refugee leaders representing 7 communities participate in capacity building that covered issues including UNHCR procedures and legal services available from NGOs.

The full report is available [here](#).

Photo: Christian Jepsen/NRC/19-12-2022



Regional Advocacy

During 2022, ADSP undertook various initiatives to advocate for durable solutions for displaced populations at the regional level. This included fostering an environment for cross country learnings in the region, taking lead in holding quarterly coordination meetings on Rohingya advocacy, participating and hosting/ co-hosting workshops, seminars, and policy dialogues. A summary of key events is provided below.

Panel Discussion: What if...? What now...? Protection of Rohingya Refugees in Southeast Asia in 2022 and Beyond

ONLINE PANEL DISCUSSION

What if...? What now...? Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Southeast Asia in 2022 and Beyond

Speakers:
Honourable Ahmad Tarmizi bin Sulaiman, Malaysian Parliamentarian, Chair of All Party Parliamentary Group on Refugee Policy
Mr. Jerald Joseph, Commissioner, Human Rights Commission of Malaysia [SUHAKAM]
Mr. Usman Hamid, Indonesia Director, Amnesty International
Ms. Hafsar Tameesuddin, Chair of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network
Mr. Charlie Goodlake, External Relations Officer, UNHCR

Moderator:
Ms. Lilianne Fan, International Director and Co-Founder of the Geutanyoë Foundation

Thursday 10 February 2022
14.30 Dhaka // 15.30 Bangkok via MS Teams

PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE EVENT AT
<https://forms.gle/NDQ9N6G10D1G1G5A7>

ADSP ASEAN REFUGEE COUNCIL ASEAN UNHCR Migration Centre European Union

This event was designed to act as a platform and sounding board for greater regional thinking and action for Rohingya protection. Bringing together a range of regional experts including Honourable Ahmad Tarmizi bin Sulaiman, Malaysian Parliamentarian and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Refugee Policy; Mr. Charlie Goodlake, External Relations Officer, UNHCR; Mr. Usman Hamid, Indonesia Director, Amnesty International; and, Ms. Hafsar Tameesuddin, Chair of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, the event discussed the current state of play for Rohingya in the region, and what opportunities exist by which stakeholders should engage with. The event brought together attendees from civil society, donors, academia, government, and refugee communities themselves.

Participation in the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration

On 24 March 2022, the Centre for Policy Development (CPD) convened the 11th Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM). Established in August 2015, the ADFM is a ‘second track’ process that pursues more

effective, durable, and dignified approaches to forced migration in the Asia-Pacific. Bringing together government officials, international organisations, academia and civil society, the meeting discussed a range of pertinent issues – including the plight of the Rohingya. Participants in the 11th meeting were fortunate to engage with Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin, as well as recorded comments from Indonesian Foreign Minister Ibu Retno Masurdi, on how Indo-Pacific nations can strengthen cooperation to address forced migration through multilateral regional forums amongst other means. Another meeting was held in July which focused exclusively on the ongoing humanitarian crises in Afghanistan and Myanmar, with discussions centered around how the region can better respond. A summary of the second meeting is captured in the [Co-Convenors’ Statement](#), which articulates a range of areas of consensus and opportunities for further exploration.

Coordinating Regional Advocacy to Address Rohingya Displacement and Humanitarian and Peacebuilding Challenges in Myanmar

On 10 and 17 May 2022, ADSP, the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) hosted two virtual workshops to exchange information and interactively map regional advocacy opportunities in two thematic areas: (1) coordinated regional responses to protracted Rohingya displacement and (2) humanitarian access, peacebuilding, and protection in Myanmar. Participants included international NGOs, national NGOs and academics from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

For the workshop, ‘regional advocacy’ was defined as advocacy that targets regional policymakers or duty bearers (e.g., ASEAN bodies, South-Southeast Asian states, UN agencies or donors) and promotes ASEAN-level or multilateral action to address refugee protection or humanitarian challenges of regional significance. The workshop provided a forum to strengthen relationships—particularly between INGOs and NNGOs—survey current advocacy strategies and activities, identify areas of collaboration or coordination, and pinpoint advocacy opportunities.

Day 1 focused on regional responses to Rohingya displacement. The first session included three presentations followed by Q&A. Firstly, the Norwegian Refugee Council shared updates on challenges facing Rohingya in Rakhine State because of COVID-19 and fallout from the February 2021

military takeover and highlighted key barriers to the return of Rohingya refugees. Second, H.E. Yuyun Wahyuningrum, Indonesia's representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, outlined past efforts to promote a regional refugee response framework, and shared insights on current scope to revive regional approaches. And third, Adam Severson, ADSP's Regional Durable Solutions Specialist, described previous attempts to develop a regional framework to address Rohingya displacement, most recently UNHCR's 2018 Solidarity Approach, and summarized initiatives to build momentum toward new regional dialogue.

Following the presentations, participants divided into two breakout groups to map current and prospective opportunities to advocate with regional policymakers and duty bearers to support development of a regional response that adequately protects displaced Rohingya in the medium- and longer-terms and equitably share responsibility.

Day 2 addressed broader humanitarian, peacebuilding and protection challenges in Myanmar, and commenced with an overview of recent regional advocacy efforts by INGOs and NNGOs. Dr. Lina Alexandra, Head of the Department of International Relations at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta, next compared the approaches of key Asian states towards Myanmar. Adelina Kamal, former Executive Director of the AHA Centre, concluded the presentation segment by explaining the structure of the ASEAN Secretariat and the limits of the Secretariat to guide policy toward Myanmar. Day 2 concluded with breakout discussions on prospective advocacy opportunities, areas of overlap and means of better coordination.

The workshop is part of a sustained effort by ADSP and partners to improve communication and foster greater coordination and collaboration. ADSP and ICVA have held follow up meetings with participants from Indonesia and Thailand to further map key interlocutors in the Thai and Indonesian governments.

Regional roundtable on Myanmar and Rohingya-related advocacy toward Indonesia

On 23 August 2022, ADSP convened a virtual, two-hour roundtable of Indonesian experts and NGOs engaged in regional-level advocacy to discuss advocacy strategies toward Indonesia as incoming 2023 Chair of ASEAN. Eighteen participants shared observations about Indonesia's stances on: the Five-Point Consensus; displacement, humanitarian challenges and human rights abuses in Myanmar; coordinated regional approaches to irregular movement of refugees from Myanmar; and medium-/long-term regional responses to protracted Rohingya displacement. Participants also analyzed prospective

barriers and opportunities for Indonesia to promote stronger ASEAN responses to the crisis in Myanmar and more coordinated solutions for Rohingya refugees and shared current or planned advocacy toward Indonesia on these issues (messaging, activities, targets, outcomes, etc.).

Asia Pacific Forced Migration Workshop



From 12-14 September 2022, ADSP – in collaboration with ICVA and APRRN– organised the Asia Pacific Forced Migration Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop brought together 25 participants from NGOs and INGOs across the region from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia. The workshop had three key objectives: (1) for regional networks to develop a clearer understanding of the key forced migration issues members are working on in the region, and priority areas of support; (2) Increased understanding and concrete steps on how to maximize engagement in key forced migration policy processes occurring in the region (e.g. SSAR, SG Action Agenda); and (3) Identification of collective action opportunities related to the GRF in 2023, as well as ongoing processes in Geneva (ExCom, and SCOM).

The workshop commenced with an exchange between attendees on the priority issues in their respective countries, followed by a briefing from ICVA's Forced Migration team on global forced migration priorities & processes, and how actors in the Asia Pacific can engage. Day Two was facilitated with the support of UNHCR colleagues from the Afghanistan operation, as well as the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. The sessions on this day focused primarily on the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SP4SSAR), as well as the country level operations of the support platform. Attendees were provided the space to better understand this platform, and to engage in dialogue for improved access and contribution to the same. The final day of the workshop centered around the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) to be held in December 2023. Sessions unpacked the 'road to the GRF', and provided space for NGOs to brainstorm potential interventions, engagement, and resources that may be needed.

ADSP-IOM-UNHCR Regional Rohingya Consultation

On 15 September 2022, ADSP co-organised a regional consultation on Rohingya displacement with IOM and the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. Participants included nearly 50 representatives of UN agencies, NNGOs, and INGOs—including DRC, IRC and NRC—working with Rohingya communities in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The consultation had two key objectives: (1) to examine prospects for more coordinated regional action to address protracted Rohingya displacement; and (2) to identify promising, national-level advocacy initiatives relevant to Rohingya refugees and consider avenues for transnational sharing of best practices and resources.

The consultation began with updates on the situation for Rohingya refugees across the four countries, highlighting ongoing challenges and areas of progress. Next a panel of UN, NGO and academic experts reflected on past initiatives to promote regional responses to Rohingya displacement and develop a regional refugee protection framework. Within breakout groups, participants discussed entry points, including existing regional forums, for encouraging regional governments to explore protection-oriented coordination to better respond to irregular movement of Rohingya, and to engage in coordinated medium-term planning to protect and

support Rohingya refugees with limited prospects for voluntary return for the foreseeable future. Breakout groups also considered how to coordinate national-level advocacy on issues relevant to Rohingya communities that cut across Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, including xenophobia and private sector support for livelihoods.

Inaugural Quarterly Regional Advocacy Roundtable

On 24 October 2022, ADSP facilitated an inaugural quarterly regional advocacy roundtable in Bangkok. Co-hosted by IOM and UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, the roundtable was developed as a regular, Chatham House forum for streamlining communication and coordination among UN agencies, donors and NGOs engaged in policy advocacy to address protracted Rohingya displacement in South and Southeast Asia. Participants shared updates on regional protection concerns, including risk of arrest and refoulement; irregular and unsafe movement overland and by sea; access to resettlement; and exclusion from national protection frameworks. Participants also analyzed current and prospective political shifts affecting refugee policy—chiefly Malaysia's November elections and Indonesia's chairmanship of ASEAN—and discussed advocacy strategies.

Photo: Evan Jones / ADSP



Global Initiatives

European Conference # DIASPORA Action for Afghanistan

The Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Program organised a conference from 15-16 May 2022 in Brussels, Belgium to bring together Afghan diaspora from across Europe and further afield. As an official strategic partner to the conference, the ADSP provided support in organising the conference and engaged in expert contributions to the Call to Action.

The conference brought together 119 participants including 100 members of the Afghan diaspora from 19 European countries as well as Afghanistan, Australia, the United States, and Canada representing more than 70 diaspora organisations. The first day of the conference was internal and focused on "getting together", building trust and improving coordination and collaboration. The second day was: "A call to action" and included dialogue with external European actors on the role of the diaspora in relation to the new political and operating environment in Afghanistan. On the second day, participants launched the conference declaration: Afghan Diaspora Call to Action, a series of recommendations towards EU and Members States.

ADSP facilitated a session titled 'Mechanisms for increased coordination and collaboration between the diaspora and civil society inside Afghanistan'. This session brought together diaspora and civil society actors from Afghanistan to exchange upon how diaspora in Europe can support civil society efforts in Afghanistan. It looked at models for human rights monitoring, humanitarian response and coordinated advocacy and recommended pathways for increased coordination and collaboration. Importantly it underlined that the diaspora must be representative of civil society inside Afghanistan and must ensure that the principle of 'do no harm' is central to any engagement.

Professional Development Short Course on Evidence-Based Advocacy for the Afghan Diaspora

ADSP, the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS), the Danish Refugee Council Diaspora Program, and the MMC jointly organised the "Professional Development Short Course on Evidence-based Advocacy for Afghan Diaspora" in November 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Photo: DRC/2022



The objective of the training was to strengthen participants' capacity, expertise and knowledge on advocacy processes and challenges to provide an interdisciplinary overview of forced migration issues covering political, legal, social, and economic aspects. The course brought together 25 participants from the Afghan diaspora in Europe and beyond and was designed to help participants develop a comprehensive understanding of the different roles of key stakeholders including government, civil society, humanitarian agencies, UN bodies, and media to leverage effective advocacy and to promote the rights of displaced Afghans. The course was delivered through a series of structured presentations, facilitated discussions and participatory group work exercises.

Participants joined the course from across Europe (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Czech Republic, Sweden, and the United Kingdom), as well as Canada. Throughout the course, all participants exhibited an incredible energy, talent, inspiration, and ability to further enhance their work both nationally, regionally, and globally – especially in the context of the new operating environment in Afghanistan.

The course began with a refresher on international human rights laws and policies, and discussion of concepts related to human rights, refugee rights, identity, culture, and intercultural dialogue in the context of forced displacement. Discussion on advocacy strategy and tools, successful (and unsuccessful) advocacy models and use of research for evidence-based advocacy were held in the following days, including group exercises and presentation of elevator pitches from participants to help them gain better understanding and in-depth perspective on their current advocacy work and future goals.

A special advocacy opportunity was incorporated where Lars Bo Møller, the Danish Special Representative for Afghanistan and Mads Hovøre Andersen, Special Advisor for Afghanistan attended lunch on the second day. One of the participants facilitated a discussion and Q&A session discussing Danish engagement in Afghanistan, the situation of Afghan asylum seekers and refugees in Denmark and the situation of marginalized groups in Afghanistan.

Photo: Ingebjørg Kårstad/NRC/ 02-06-2022



Other ADSP Publications

During 2022 ADSP published multiple reports and papers. These were conducted as a result of a needs analysis from ADSP members and other stakeholders and were designed to support advocacy interventions as well as inform donor priorities.

Briefing Note: IDP returns in Afghanistan: are durable solutions possible?

As of December 2021, there were an estimated 3.5 million IDPs displaced due to conflict. Whilst displacement due to conflict has decreased since the Taliban de facto authorities assumed power, deepening poverty and a dire humanitarian situation continues to act as push factors for IDPs. To address prolonged internal displacement, the Taliban authorities have been increasing pressure on IDPs in some informal settlements to return, and for humanitarian actors to support returns from informal settlements to areas of origin. The humanitarian response architecture currently in place in Afghanistan, however, remains ill-equipped to provide comprehensive long-term support. With most development funding to Afghanistan suspended since mid-August 2021 because of international sanctions, the current response is almost exclusively geared towards the provision of short-term emergency interventions to displaced and host communities.

To raise the attention of this issue, the Briefing Note highlighted four elements that must be considered when addressing IDP displacement in Afghanistan:

1. Durable solutions are only possible if all stakeholders – including the Taliban authorities and humanitarian and development actors – work together systematically to facilitate the fulfilment of IDPs’ intentions, whether these include return, local integration, or relocation, without discrimination nor impediments.
2. Return initiatives need to be sufficiently resourced and must extend beyond ‘cash for return’ modalities. A holistic response that keeps durable solutions central is required, as is the need for multi-year funding.
3. Returns cannot be seen as the only viable durable solution for IDPs. Greater investment and engagement are needed to support a range of initiatives that supports the broader durable solutions agenda.
4. International organisations need to define, articulate, and share how the success of any pilot will be measured. This must be accompanied by clear timelines and monitoring frameworks for how such an assessment will be done.

You can access the full briefing note [here](#).

ADSP Article: Lessons from drought response in Afghanistan

In 2018 Afghanistan experienced a severe drought that had a direct impact on more than two-thirds of the country’s population of 38 million. The drought resulted in failed harvests, empty groundwater reserves, and a spike in food insecurity in 22 out of 34 provinces. Subsequently, it led to mass internal displacement with approximately 371,000 Afghans forced to leave their homes and seek refuge in other parts of the country. In Afghanistan’s western region alone, the drought triggered the displacement of more than 170,000 people. Four years later, and in the midst of a second drought, many of these internally displaced persons have still not been able to access durable solutions, unable to return to their places of origin or to integrate within local communities.

Failure to anticipate drought and to coordinate an effective, recovery-focused response contributed to the protracted displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in Afghanistan. In the face of climate crisis impacts, ensuring preparedness and early action is key.

By 2040, it is estimated that 700 million people worldwide will experience drought for six months or longer, resulting in harsh conditions that will undoubtedly contribute to the forced movement of people – either internally or across national boundaries. Without understanding what has (and has not) worked in different contexts, climate-displaced communities will largely remain unable to access durable solutions.

Learning the lessons from climate emergencies in countries like Afghanistan is essential to strengthening responses both in Afghanistan and elsewhere. You can access the full article in the [Forced Migration Review, Climate Crisis and Migration](#).

NGO Statement on Asia and the Pacific

On 8 March 2022, ADSP Manager Evan Jones delivered the oral NGO Statement on Asia and the Pacific on behalf of a wide range of NGOs at the 83rd meeting of the UNHCR Standing Committee in Geneva, Switzerland. The [statement](#) focused on the following points:

1. Durable solutions for Afghans
2. Voluntary relocation to Bhasan Char
3. Humanitarian access
4. Sanctions and lack of development funding to Afghanistan
5. Asylum and pushbacks
6. Detention
7. Refugee women and girls
8. Uyghurs protection needs
9. Support States hosting protracted refugee populations

Submission of Statement: Intersessional Panel Discussion on the human rights of migrants in vulnerable situations

ADSP submitted an oral statement during the second session of Intersessional Panel Discussion on the human rights of migrants in vulnerable situations i.e., Situations of vulnerability arising from the reasons for migration. Delivered by ADSP Manager Evan Jones, the statement stressed the need for action to address the vulnerable situations of displacement affected persons from Afghanistan and Myanmar. The full statement is available [here](#).

ADSP in the Media

In addition to building capacity of local organisations, conducting research and advocating for durable solutions for displaced population, ADSP has also continued to utilise the media to raise awareness, inform public opinion and influence policy makers.

Notable media articles include:

1. [The world needs to step up support for Afghan refugee education in Pakistan \(TRT World\)](#)
2. [Displaced from Myanmar: Can't Go Back and Can't Go Forward \(The Diplomat\)](#)
3. [Amid Afghanistan's Emergency, Its Neighbors Need Support \(The Diplomat\)](#)
4. [Rescue efforts urgently needed as hundreds of Rohingya refugees continue to struggle to stave off dehydration and starvation while stranded at sea in Asia \(Press Release\)](#)

Photo: Christian Jepsen/NRC/16-01-2022



Supporters and Partners

Our work in 2022 would not have been possible without the support of our donors and partners. We hope to engage more effectively in 2023 to create a difference on the lives of millions of displaced individuals across Asia.

Funders

- European Union
- Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Partners

1. Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network
2. Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies
3. Centre for Policy Development
4. Geutanyoe Foundation
5. HOST International
6. International Organisation for Migration
7. International Council of Voluntary Agencies
8. Jesuit Refugee Service - Indonesia
9. Mixed Migration Centre
10. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Get Involved

At ADSP we welcome insights, comments and suggestions from community members and practitioners alike. Stay in touch with the latest developments by visiting our [website](#).

Find information on displacement in Asia along with policy recommendations through our database. Our publications cover research reports, briefing notes, statements, press releases, media articles and newsletters. <https://adsp.ngo/publications/>



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Next Steps

In the next year ADSP will be working towards achieving the objectives set out in its 2023 – 2025 Strategy. The work will be focused towards two workstreams i.e., Afghanistan & Myanmar displacement.

Team Members

Adam Severson

Adam Severson is the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform's Regional Specialist for Bangladesh and Myanmar, coordinating the platform's Rohingya-focused advocacy. Adam joined ADSP in February 2021. He is a US-qualified lawyer and has developed legal aid programs for refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand and the US. In 2018, Adam was an ASEAN Fulbright Scholar researching national asylum systems in Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand.

Evan Jones

Evan is a refugee advocate with a BA in European Studies, and a Master of International Development Studies from the University of New South Wales in Australia. He has worked on human rights and refugee protection issues for over a decade, with most of his work focused on the Asia-Pacific region. Evan is currently based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, as the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform Manager. Evan has extensive policy and advocacy experience at national, regional, and international levels, and has been widely published in the media on refugee issues.

Huzan Waqar

Huzan is an aid worker with twelve years' experience in development and humanitarian programming. She has worked directly with communities, ensuring that her work amplifies the voices of affected people. She has vast experience developing partnerships with various government authorities, as well as national and international actors to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs implemented. She is a campaigner at heart and has worked on numerous subjects including but not limited to food insecurity, education, women rights, health, refugees and IDPs. She is currently leading ADSP's SHARP Asia project.

Iffat Anjum

Iffat Anjum works as a Regional Specialist at the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform. A development practitioner with six years of experience and expertise in research, and policy advocacy, Iffat has worked closely with different government bodies, national and international NGOs, and private sector stakeholders, to generate evidence through research and pursue policy reforms at national and regional levels. She has experience in designing and managing development and research projects, conducting policy and regulatory analyses, quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis, and strategy development. Passionate about pro-poor development and inclusive policymaking, Iffat obtained her bachelor and master's degrees in Economics from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Malini Sivapragasam

Malini has over 10 years of diverse experience in managing numerous end-to-end community sustainable and public health projects in Malaysia. She is well versed in project management, advocacy, strategic and stakeholder management coupled with strong leadership acumen. In the areas of stakeholder management, she has successfully forged positive relationships with local partners and stakeholders in civil and governmental sectors.



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